The 400 Blows

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**Summary:** Antoine Doniel is a 12 year old boy growing up in Paris during the early 1950s. His parents do not understand him and he is tormented at school by his insensitive teacher. Antoine often runs away from both places. The boy finally quits school after being accused of plagiarism by his cruel teacher. He makes a stupid move by stealing his father’s typewriter. His father finds out about this and turns him into the police, who lock the boy up with criminals. Antoine is placed in an observation center for troubled youth near the shore, per his mother’s wishes. A psychiatrist at the center probes Antoine’s unhappiness and he answers with a series of long confessions. One day while playing a game of football with the other boys, Antoine escapes under a fence and runs toward the ocean, a place he has wanted to go his whole life. The film ends with a freeze frame of Antoine staring off into the sea.

**Difference between this movie and modern films:** in most movies today there is an objective or a problem that the main character is trying to solve. In this film it is just a story of the boy’s life and there is not a real storyline or plot that audience is trying to figure out. This is what makes this film so significant in the French New Wave Movement.